

Chapter 7

Delivering High Quality Homes



Impington, South Cambridgeshire

Chapter 7 Delivering High Quality Homes

- 7.1 Building new market and affordable homes to meet housing needs will support the creation of healthy communities and contribute to the success of the local economy. Building the right type of homes in the right places can also promote energy efficiency and help reduce fuel poverty. The Local Plan needs to do this whilst ensuring the protection and enhancement of our environment.
- 7.2 The Local Plan needs to consider the housing needs of the whole community including single person households, families, elderly people, people with disabilities, Gypsies and Travellers, and people wishing to build their own homes and be sufficiently flexible to cope with changes over the plan period. A proportion of the housing will need to be available at below market costs to help households who cannot afford open market prices or rents.
- 7.3 Housing needs and aspirations can often be met by extending existing homes or by replacing them. Where non-residential buildings lie vacant, turning them into homes can provide attractive places to live, provided that this is not at the cost of providing appropriate local places of employment. National planning policy requires that the Local Plan considers restricting inappropriate development in gardens and limiting new housing development in the countryside.

Key Facts:

- South Cambridgeshire has high house prices in relation to earnings. In June 2012 average house prices were 6.9 times average household incomes with the ratio increasing to 10.3 times when comparing lower quartile prices and incomes.
- In June 2012 the average house price was £299,359 compared to an average price across England of £250,056.
- A housing register with over 3,378 households seeking affordable housing in March 2013. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment identifies that 11,838 affordable homes will be required to meet current and arising need in the period to 2031.
- 1,416 new affordable homes built during 5 year period between 1 April 2007 and 31 March 2012 including 276 built on exception sites.
- The Gypsy and Traveller community has a need for additional site and pitch provision.
- An ageing population with growth forecast between 2001 to 2021 of 95% for the 60-74 age group and 108% for those 75+.
- The 2011 census recorded that 41.5% of homes were detached houses or bungalows, 33.5% semi-detached houses or bungalows, 18% terraced houses or bungalows, 6% flats or maisonettes, and 1% were caravans and other dwellings.

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- The Census 2011 recorded that 25% of households in the district were of one person (11.5% pensioners), 31% were households with dependent children, 9% were households with non-dependent children, 32% were households with no children (10% of which were pensioners), and 3% were other types of household.

Allocations for Residential Development at Villages

POLICY H/1: Allocations for Residential Development at Villages

1. The following sites shown on the Policies Map are allocated for housing development and associated uses. They will be developed in accordance with relevant Local Plan policy requirements, and the development requirements identified in respect of each site in the table below. The number of homes granted planning permission on the site may be higher or lower than the indicative capacity and should be determined through a design-led approach.
2. All sites will need to make appropriate financial contribution to any necessary additional infrastructure requirements, including towards additional capacity in local schools.

Site reference	Address	Area (ha.) and indicative dwelling capacity	Development requirements
H/1:a	Sawston, Dales Manor Business Park	10.7 ha. 200 dwellings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution to any highway works required to mitigate the impact of development as a whole on the eastern flank of Sawston; • Creation of a new vehicular access to Wakelin Avenue; • Creation of a significant landscape buffer along the eastern boundary of the site where it adjoins farmland to provide a soft green village edge; • Land bounded by East Way, Middle Way and Grove Road to be developed to provide light industrial and office employment (Use Class B1).

Site reference	Address	Area (ha.) and indicative dwelling capacity	Development requirements
H/1:b	Sawston, land north of Babraham Road (In Babraham Parish)	3.64 ha. 80 dwellings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution to any highway works required to mitigate the impact of development as a whole on the eastern flank of Sawston; • Creation of a significant landscape buffer along the eastern boundary of the site where it adjoins farmland to provide a soft green village edge.
H/1:c	Sawston, land south of Babraham Road (Part of the site is in Babraham Parish)	11.64 ha. 260 dwellings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution to any highway works required to mitigate the impact of development as a whole on the eastern flank of Sawston; • A contribution to any necessary additional capacity in local schools and/or the provision of land to enable the expansion of Icknield Primary School. • Creation of a significant landscape buffer along the eastern and southern boundary of the site where it adjoins farmland to provide a soft green village edge; • Vehicular access from Babraham Road only, but to include additional cycle and pedestrian links into Sawston along the western boundary of the site including to The Green Road, Church Lane and Plantation Road; • To come forward as a single proposal in a comprehensive scheme.
H/1:d	Histon & Impington, land north of Impington Lane	1.21 ha. 25 dwellings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of a significant landscape buffer along the boundary of the site where it adjoins or could be seen from open countryside to provide a soft green village edge; • Design to mitigate impact on the conservation area and nearby listed buildings; • No built development to take place in flood zones 2 or 3.

Site reference	Address	Area (ha.) and indicative dwelling capacity	Development requirements
H/1:e	Melbourn, land off New Road and rear of Victoria Way	3 ha. 65 dwellings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creation of a significant landscape buffer along the boundary of the site where it adjoins or could be seen from open countryside to provide a soft green village edge.
H/1:f	Gamlingay, Green End Industrial Estate	4.09 ha. 90 dwellings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be developed as a mixed use site, incorporating employment uses utilising not less than 25% of the site, providing light industrial and/or office employment (Use Class B1 and B2) compatible with a residential area.
H/1:g	Willingham, land east of Rockmill End	2.12 ha. 50 dwellings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creation of a significant landscape buffer along the boundary of the site where it adjoins or could be seen from open countryside to provide a soft green village edge, and provide capacity for a sustainable drainage system.
H/1:h	Land at Bennell Farm, Comberton (In Toft Parish)	6.27 ha. 90 dwellings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residential development will be located to the east of the access road running through the site and be at a low density of to take account of the character of this part of Comberton; Will be required to incorporate a full size football pitch and changing facilities for Toft village; Will be required to provide community car parking that is also available for overspill parking for Comberton Village College; The affordable housing provision to meet the affordable housing needs of the villages of Toft and Comberton, proportionate to the level of need in each village.

7.4 The Local Plan must allocate sites for new housing development to meet the long term needs of the district and support forecast new jobs. As detailed in the Spatial Strategy chapter, the majority of new housing will be delivered in the form of previously planned urban extensions to Cambridge, Northstowe and Cambourne, and additional new settlements at Waterbeach and Bourn Airfield and further expansion of Cambourne, which are addressed in Chapter 3: Strategic Sites.

- 7.5 The number of allocations in villages has been limited, and focused on opportunities at the more sustainable villages. They have been identified taking account of a range of factors and opportunities provided by individual sites, such as avoiding the best and most versatile agricultural land, brownfield sites, avoiding heritage and wildlife designations, landscape and townscape impacts, site access, school capacity, and site viability and deliverability.
- 7.6 The most significant village development is planned at Sawston, one of the best served villages in the district in terms of access to services and facilities and will provide new homes close to the research parks located to the south of Cambridge. Allocations will provide an opportunity for a comprehensive and planned approach to the eastern side of the village, utilising opportunities for the reuse of previously developed land.
- 7.7 The identified development requirements for each of the housing sites are necessary to ensure that the likely impacts of the development will be adequately mitigated. Further site development requirements and contributions may be required by national planning policy and other policies in the Local Plan when a planning application is under consideration, where these are necessary to make a particular development acceptable in planning terms.
- 7.8 Associated uses in the context of this policy can include uses commonly found in and appropriate to residential areas such as affordable housing, schools and childcare facilities, open spaces for recreation and sport including allotments and play areas, healthcare facilities, and small local shops and services.
- 7.9 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) may be prepared during the plan period which add detail to Local Plan policies or provide further guidance on how sites should be developed. Account should be taken of such SPD as material planning considerations.

Bayer CropScience Site, Hauxton

POLICY H/2: Bayer CropScience Site, Hauxton

1. Land at Bayer CropScience Plc, Hauxton, is allocated for a sustainable high density, residential-led mixed-use development. Development of the 8.7 hectare site will comprise housing and B1 employment development as well as open space and community facilities. Development will be required to provide appropriate contributions to local services and facilities and the provision of a high quality bus service and cycle links to Cambridge (including long-term financial support if necessary).

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2. The development will include:
 - a. The creation of riverside informal open space linking between the proposed Trumpington Meadows Country Park and Hauxton village, retaining appropriate existing features of ecological interest, and creation of new features that will enhance the site;
 - b. Establishing pedestrian and cycle links to the Trumpington Meadows development, and to the Trumpington Park and Ride;
 - c. Establishing pedestrian and cycle links to the village of Hauxton;
 - d. Contributions to improved public transport provision along the A10 corridor;
 - e. Improved community facilities;
 - f. Finding uses for the listed buildings on the site at the Hauxton Mill complex;
 - g. The remediation of all contamination caused by previous industrial uses of the site;
 - h. Redevelopment that will secure a reduced visual impact of the site on the openness of the Cambridge Green Belt.
3. A Masterplan will be required for the site.

- 7.10 The Bayer CropScience site near Hauxton offers a specific opportunity where a brownfield site is available for redevelopment, located near to the edge of Cambridge. The site comprises a vacant previously intensively developed industrial site that included manufacturing and warehousing. Appropriate redevelopment will comprise a mix of uses to maximise sustainability and it will enable visual improvement of this prominent site, improving a major approach into Cambridge. It will need to be sensitively designed to take account of its position surrounded by the Green Belt. It is capable of being developed with good links to the Trumpington Meadows development, and Trumpington Park and Ride, as well as the village of Hauxton itself. The site also offers opportunities for improved access to the River Cam.
- 7.11 Part of the site lies within the medium risk flood zone, and appropriate mitigation measures will be required. The site was contaminated and remediation works have been undertaken and at time of writing site monitoring continues to be undertaken. Development should not commence on site until the Council has agreed that satisfactory remediation has been undertaken.
- 7.12 The Bayer CropScience site was allocated for residential-led mixed-use development including B1 employment development, open space and community facilities in the Site Specific Policies Development Plan Document (DPD) (adopted in January 2010). Outline planning permission was granted for a scheme including up to 380 dwellings in February 2010. A reserved matters planning permission for phase 1 (201 dwellings) was granted in December 2012. Detailed masterplanning of the site has resulted in the site being anticipated to provide a total of 285 dwellings.

- 7.13 Proposals for the redevelopment of the recreation buildings and waste water treatment facility on the western side of the A10 will be considered in the context of proposals for appropriate development within the Green Belt. As a planning objective it would be highly desirable to secure the removal of the incongruous industrial structures on the western part of the site. Particular consideration should be given to proposals that remove these structures and improve the visual appearance of the Green Belt.

Papworth Everard West Central

Policy H/3: Papworth Everard West Central

1. Redevelopment of Papworth Everard West Central, as defined on the Policies Map, must be aimed at the continued invigoration of the village centre with the principle of providing a mix of uses including community uses, employment uses and housing development.
2. Any scheme for redevelopment must:
 - a. Be well related to, and respect the character of, Papworth Everard village centre; and
 - b. Integrate with surrounding development including the new residential development to the south.
3. Exceptionally, planning permission will be granted for housing development above the scale permitted in a Minor Rural Centre.

- 7.14 The Site Specific Policies DPD identified an area in Papworth Everard for redevelopment that would provide a mix of uses to enhance the village centre. Papworth West Central contains a number of buildings that have reached the end of their life or that are currently unused. The redevelopment or reuse of these buildings is an opportunity for continued invigoration of the village centre. Located at the heart of the expanded village any redevelopment will be based on the principle of providing a mix of uses in the Papworth West Central area including community uses, employment uses and housing.

Fen Drayton Former Land Settlement Association Estate

Policy H/4: Fen Drayton Former Land Settlement Association Estate

Within the former Land Settlement Association Estate at Fen Drayton, as defined on the Policies Map, planning permission for the redevelopment of existing buildings (excluding glasshouses) will be permitted provided that:

- a. Any new dwellings achieve Code for Sustainable Homes Level 6 and any non-residential buildings achieve Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) outstanding standard;
- b. It can be demonstrated that the buildings are no longer needed for agricultural purposes; and
- c. The development would not occupy a larger footprint than the existing buildings that are being replaced.

- 7.15 The Land Settlement Association (LSA) was created in the 1930s to carry out an experimental scheme for the provision of smallholdings for unemployed persons, with financial assistance from the Government. The scheme ended in the 1980s and only a very small number of smallholdings are still in commercial horticultural use, although some other commercial uses now operate within the area. The legacy of the experiment is a network of smallholdings with dwellings along the road frontages, a collection of glasshouses and outbuildings in varying states of repair, and large areas of unused land.
- 7.16 The Site Specific Policies DPD originally identified the former LSA estate at Fen Drayton as a location for experimental and ground-breaking forms of sustainable living. This replaced the previous policy included in the Local Plan 2004 which restricted development within the estate to that directly related to agriculture, horticulture, forestry or other uses appropriate to a rural area.
- 7.17 The Code for Sustainable Homes (CfSH) and Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) for non-residential buildings are nationally recognised assessments for measuring the sustainability of buildings. Each dwelling or building is assessed against a number of categories covering energy use, water consumption, materials, surface water run-off, waste, pollution, health and wellbeing, management and ecology, to produce an overall score for the sustainability of the dwelling or building.
- 7.18 In certain circumstances, the local planning authority will consider alternative development proposals:
- a new dwelling that achieves CfSH Level 5 provided that the energy performance rating of the existing dwelling is significantly improved through retrofitting of energy efficiency solutions and/or renewable energy micro-generation technologies; or

- using the combined footprint from the demolition of an existing house and an eligible outbuilding to provide a new dwelling that achieves CfSH Level 5.

South of A1307, Linton

Policy H/5: South of A1307, Linton

South of the A1307 at Linton, within the area defined on the Policies Map, windfall residential development will not be permitted other than improvements to existing properties.

- 7.19 The A1307 is a major transport route that links Cambridge to Haverhill and is a high casualty route. The southern part of Linton is severed from the rest of the village by the A1307 and includes employment uses, residential uses and Linton Zoo. Although there is a pelican crossing and reduced speed limit, the A1307 makes it difficult for residents, workers or visitors to safely and easily access the services and facilities in the centre of the village. Windfall residential development in this location would not be sustainable with its poor access to the village facilities and services.

Residential Moorings

Policy H/6: Residential Moorings

1. A site of 0.95 hectares at Chesterton Fen Road, Milton is allocated for residential boat moorings.
2. The site must be designed so that it does not impede navigation and/or the use of the footpath alongside the river.

- 7.20 The site was proposed by the Conservators of the River Cam. The delivery of additional moorings will relieve pressure on areas within Cambridge, and provide further support for tourism. The Cambridge Local Plan allocates an adjoining area of land within their administrative boundary, which would be developed with this site.
- 7.21 The site lies in the Green Belt. Built development needed to support the moorings should be kept to the minimum needed to support the use of the moorings. Proposals will need to address impacts on the riverside footpath, to ensure continued convenient use for users. Appropriate provision of car and cycle parking will also be required. Proposals will need to be accompanied by full ecological and landscape assessments, to address the resulting changes to the nature of the site. There is also known archaeology in the area, which will require assessment prior to development.

Housing Density

Policy H/7: Housing Density

1. Housing developments including rural exception sites, will achieve an average net density of:
 - a. 30 dwellings per hectare (dph) in Rural Centres, Minor Rural Centre villages, and Group villages; and
 - b. 40 dph in urban extensions to Cambridge and in new settlements.
2. The net density on a site may vary from the above where justified by the character of the locality, the scale of the development, or other local circumstances.

- 7.22 The density of residential development describes the number of houses or flats that are developed on an area of land. Achieving the right density of development for a location is important to the character of a place and local quality of life. The appropriate density for any particular location will be determined by the nature of the area and by its surroundings and by a need to use land efficiently as a finite resource. A net site density measure includes only those areas which will be developed for housing and directly associated uses such as access roads within the site, private garden space, car parking, incidental open space and landscaping, and children's play areas.
- 7.23 A density of 30 dwellings per hectare will achieve an efficient use of land. A higher density of 40 dph (net) will make the most of land in our most sustainable locations on the Cambridge fringe and in new settlements. 30 dph is identified for all but our smallest Infill villages. Local character, the scale of development, and other circumstances can justify development at lower and higher densities than 30 dph and 40 dph (net). Density guidelines are not needed for developments and rural affordable housing exception site developments in Infill villages where a design-led approach taking account of local circumstances including the character of the locality and the scale of the development should be followed.

Housing Mix

Policy H/8: Housing Mix

1. A wide choice, type and mix of housing will be provided to meet the needs of different groups in the community including families with children, older people and people with disabilities. The market homes in developments of 10 or more homes will consist of:
 - a. At least 30% 1 or 2 bedroom homes;
 - b. At least 30% 3 bedroom homes;
 - c. At least 30% 4 or more bedroom homes;
 - d. With a 10% flexibility allowance that can be added to any of the above categories taking account of local circumstances.
2. Section 1 is subject to:
 - e. The housing mix of affordable homes in all developments being determined by local housing needs evidence;
 - f. The mix of market homes to be provided on sites of 9 or fewer homes taking account of local circumstances.
3. All affordable homes and 1 in every 20 market homes in a development will be built to meet the Lifetime Homes Standard.
4. Developments including specialist accommodation for the elderly (with or without care) will not be subject to the housing mix set out in section 1 and will demonstrate appropriate design standards.

7.24 In order to deliver a wide choice of high quality homes, widen opportunities for home ownership and create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities, it is important that we plan for a mix of housing based on the needs of different groups in the community. The high cost of housing locally also affects the size of home that many people can afford, even if their preference would be for a larger property, and it is important to provide for everyone's needs and help create mixed and balanced communities. The private rented sector plays an essential role in the housing market. The Census 2011 identifies a tenure change to private rented of 3.1% from the Census 2001 for South Cambridgeshire. Affordability within the private sector is a major concern for the District. The increase in size of deposit required for both market and shared ownership means there is likely to be a significant demand for private rented accommodation from low to middle income households. We will support the private rented sector to grow through build to let, to meet the growing demand for rented homes as part of the market element of housing developments.

7.25 Our housing stock has traditionally been dominated by larger detached and semi-detached family houses. Whilst recent developments have helped to increase the stock of smaller properties available, the overall imbalance of larger properties

remains. The Census 2011 for example identifies that 75% of the housing stock are detached and semi-detached houses and bungalows, with 18% terraced homes and 6% flats and maisonettes.

- 7.26 The population of the district is ageing and often older people need or prefer smaller properties that are easier to manage than their original home, with people often looking to 'downsize' to a smaller property. We also know that as people age the incidence of disability and frailty also increase, and in the age band 64-74 up to 7% of residents will be classified as frail¹. The Cambridgeshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for Older People (2010) recorded that 5% of older people received a disability living allowance and that by 2020 the prevalence of people with diabetes is expected to be 7.4%, 6% with cardiovascular disease and 2.7% with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.
- 7.27 There are a range of models that can play a part in providing specialist accommodation for older people. These include sheltered and enhanced sheltered housing, Extra Care housing, retirement villages, continuing care retirement communities and registered care homes both with and without nursing care. Where appropriate, specialist accommodation for the elderly should be provided on a mixed-tenure basis, and such accommodation should be located on sites in new settlements or within larger villages. Where any scheme providing specialist accommodation for the elderly (with or without care) includes an affordable housing component, this can count towards the overall 40% affordable housing requirement if part of a wider development.
- 7.28 Local evidence shows that in Council housing up to 41% of households include someone with a disability². This figure falls to 14.3% of private sector households of which just less than half have mobility problems. A breakdown of household composition in the district in 2011 can be read in the 'key facts' box at the start of this chapter. Building all affordable homes and 5% of private new homes to the [Lifetime Homes Standard](#) will help ensure that our housing stock will better meet the needs of all our residents. The Lifetime Homes Standard (November 2011) is a widely used national standard for ensuring that the spaces and features in new homes can readily meet or be simply adapted to meet, the needs of most people, including those with reduced mobility.
- 7.29 The provision of housing which is constructed to Wheelchair Housing Design standards will only be expected as part of the affordable housing element of developments and then only in response to identified need.

¹ Strategic Housing Market Assessment Chapter 34, Table 9.

² South Cambridgeshire Housing Strategy 2012-1016 page 27

Affordable Housing

Policy H/9: Affordable Housing

1. All developments which increase the net number of homes on a site by 3 or more will provide affordable housing as follows:
 - a. To provide that 40% of the homes on site will be affordable;
 - b. To address evidence of housing need. An agreed mix of affordable house tenures will be determined by local circumstances at the time of granting planning permission;
 - c. In small groups or clusters distributed through the site.
2. Except where:
 - d. It can be demonstrated that the level of affordable housing sought would make a development unviable in light of changing market conditions, individual site circumstances and development costs. In which case a revised mix of affordable house types and tenures and then a lower level of affordable housing provision may be negotiated;
 - e. The off-site provision of affordable dwellings can be demonstrated to have benefits such as the provision of additional affordable dwellings, or the improvement or a better use of existing housing stock and would contribute to the creation of mixed and balanced communities;
 - f. It can be demonstrated that it is not possible or appropriate to build affordable homes on-site or off-site, in which case the development will provide a financial contribution towards the future provision of affordable housing. The contribution to be of 'broadly equivalent value' to that which would have been provided on-site.

7.30 Affordable housing is housing that is subsidised and provided to eligible households in the district whose needs are not met by the market. It includes rented housing and housing where occupiers purchase part of the property. A full definition is provided in the glossary. Detailed guidance on how this policy will be implemented will be provided in a Supplementary Planning Document.

7.31 The provision of affordable housing to meet housing need is a key issue for the Council. The Housing Strategy 2012-2016 aims to deliver a range of homes that are affordable to all and where people want to live that will support economic growth and economic activity. The key driver affecting the need for affordable housing is the high cost of buying or renting on the open market in comparison to local household incomes. There is a high level of housing need in the district with 3,378 households on the Council housing register as of March 2013. The [Strategic Housing Market Assessment](#) records that identifies that 11,838 affordable homes will be required to meet current and arising need in the period to 2031, a considerable proportion of all the homes to be built to 2031, however the delivery of

such housing will be constrained by development viability, the availability of land, and the need to create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities.

- 7.32 Viability evidence and past delivery has identified that 40% affordable housing is viable for most developments in most locations across the district. The number, type, and tenure of affordable housing will be negotiated on a site by site basis informed by the current housing strategy, local housing need and relevant site constraints. Local experience has shown that major complex developments such as new settlements have significant infrastructure requirements, but all are different both in terms of location, phasing and the package of required infrastructure. If there is an issue about whether such a development will stand the affordable housing target that is a matter that can most effectively be addressed through the planning application process where all the policy calls on a development, together with other development related requirements, can be looked at comprehensively and relative priorities determined.
- 7.33 There is no guarantee that any form of public subsidy will be available to support development projects. Factors such as market and site conditions, and site-specific development costs will be taken into account and an 'open-book' approach will be taken to negotiation where necessary. Developers seeking to justify a lower proportion of affordable housing are required to demonstrate why it is not viable to provide 40% affordable housing on-site. The financial viability assessment should be prepared by the applicant. Where agreement is not reached, external consultants will be appointed to undertake a further independent viability assessment. The applicant will meet the costs of the independent assessment.
- 7.34 In line with national policy, the priority is for new affordable housing to be provided on-site so that it contributes towards creating a mix of housing. However, for some developments, the provision of affordable housing on-site may not always be possible, and in these cases the Council will exceptionally accept a financial contribution towards future affordable housing provision rather than requiring on-site provision. Only where it can be robustly justified, will provision on a separate site or through a financial contribution (of broadly equivalent value) be potentially considered as acceptable.
- 7.35 The Council has previously operated a threshold of 2 properties, but has raised this threshold to 3 to encourage more very small scale developments to come forward. Affordable homes should be integrated with market homes in small groups or clusters to create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities.

Rural Exception Site Affordable Housing

Policy H/10: Rural Exception Site Affordable Housing

1. Affordable housing developments to meet identified local housing needs on small sites adjoining a development framework boundary will be permitted subject to:
 - a. The number, size, design, mix and tenure of affordable homes are confined to, and appropriate to, meeting identified local needs;
 - b. The development is of a scale and location appropriate to the size, facilities and character of the settlement;
 - c. For sites at settlements within or adjoining the Green Belt, that no alternative sites exist that would have less impact on Green Belt purposes;
 - d. That the affordable homes are secured for occupation by those in housing need in perpetuity.
2. If viability appraisals demonstrate that a 100% affordable housing scheme is unviable, consideration will be given in order of preference to:
 - e. Changing the tenure mix of the affordable homes and/or the application of any available public subsidy;
 - f. Including the minimum market housing necessary to make the scheme viable and still remain an exception site.

7.36 Many of our rural villages face particular difficulties in securing an adequate supply of land for affordable housing to address local needs. Most villages do not have housing site allocations, house prices are often high and existing social rented housing is usually under long term occupancy and rarely available to re-let. An exception site is a site that provides affordable housing located within (for villages without a development framework boundary), or adjoining but outside a development framework boundary, as an exception to normal planning policy.

7.37 The Council has a very good record of delivering exception sites and much progress has been made to deliver new local affordable housing in this way. We work with Parish Councils to understand local needs and explore options for meeting those needs. However more could be done if landowners were prepared to make additional land available and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) asks that the Local Plan consider allowing some market housing on such sites to enable the provision of significant additional affordable housing to meet local needs.

7.38 Exception sites should provide 100% affordable housing but this may not always be possible without public subsidy. Therefore an element of market housing may be permitted on exception sites where no public subsidy is available and where changing the tenure of the affordable homes would not assist viability or properly address the local needs identified. The developer must demonstrate that the

inclusion of market housing is required to enable the site to be developed primarily for affordable housing. Developers seeking to justify a lower proportion of affordable housing are required to demonstrate why a 100% affordable housing scheme is unviable and identify what level would be viable. The financial viability assessment should be prepared by the applicant. Where agreement is not reached, external consultants will be appointed to undertake a further independent viability assessment. The applicant will meet the costs of the independent assessment.

- 7.39 To ensure priority for the affordable housing is given to people in local housing need, the Council will require the affordable housing provider to enter into a legal agreement with cascade provisions, under which applicants with a connection to the village (through residence, employment or close family) are given first priority for newly created housing, followed by those with a connection to neighbouring villages, and then those in the rest of the district.

Residential Space Standards

Policy H/11: Residential Space Standards for Market Housing

New build homes will provide internal floor areas which meet or exceed those set out in Figure 10. New homes created through residential conversions and homes created by changes of use from non-residential land uses should seek to meet or exceed the standards as far as it is practicable to do so.

- 7.40 The provision of sufficient space within and associated with new homes is an important element of good residential design and new dwellings should provide sufficient space for basic daily activities and needs. Setting a space standard will ensure a reasonable level of residential amenity and quality of life, and that there is sufficient space, privacy and storage facilities to ensure the long term sustainability and usability of new homes. The NPPF states that Local Planning Authorities should plan for a mix of housing based on current and future demographic trends, market trends and the needs of different groups in the community such as families with children, the elderly and people with disabilities. New affordable housing has been expected to meet national space standards set by the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) for many years. Their standards are considered to establish an appropriate minimum for space in the home as they cover a full range of dwelling types and consider the amount of space needed by residents. The standards can always be exceeded to provide more generous homes.
- 7.41 The room size minimums in Figure 10 are derived from the upper end of the floor area range given for affordable housing in the Homes and Communities Agency's Housing Quality Indicators (2008). A definition of 'gross internal floor area' can be found in the glossary.

Figure 10: Residential Space Standards

Designed occupancy	Dwelling type	Minimum gross internal floor area in m ²
Flats		
1 bedspace	Studio	35
2 bedspaces	1 bed flat	50
3 bedspaces	2 bed flat	67
4 bedspaces	2 bed flat	75
4 bedspaces	3 bed flat	75
5 bedspaces	3 bed flat	85
5 bedspaces	4 bed flat	85
6 bedspaces	4 bed flat	95
2 storey houses		
4 bedspaces	2 bed	75
4 bedspaces	3 bed	75
5 bedspaces	3 bed	85
5 bedspaces	4 bed	85
6 bedspaces	4 bed	100
3 storey houses		
5 bedspaces	3 bed	95
5 bedspaces	4 bed	95
6 bedspaces	4 bed	105
7 bedspaces	4 bed	115
Other standards		
Minimum bedroom sizes for single and double bedrooms respectively of 6.5 m ² , and 10 m ²		
Any room shown on plan as a study or similar to be at least the size of a single bedroom.		
Applicants to state the number of bedspaces a home is designed to accommodate rather than simply the number of bedrooms. Developers should allow approximately 10 m ² per additional bedspace.		

Extensions to Dwellings in the Countryside

Policy H/12: Extensions to Dwellings in the Countryside

Extensions to dwellings outside the village framework boundaries shown on the Policies Map will be permitted where:

- a. The development would not create a separate dwelling or be capable of separation from the existing dwelling;
- b. The extension is in scale and character with the existing dwelling and would not materially change its impact on its surroundings;
- c. The existing home is of permanent design and construction;
- d. If in the Green Belt that the extension would not result in a disproportionate addition to the original dwelling;
- e. If the original dwelling is subject to an occupancy condition, it must be demonstrated that the resultant dwelling can be supported by the viability of the site/holding or rural enterprise and that the cost of its occupation would not be unaffordable to workers employed in agriculture, forestry or another business where a rural location is essential.

7.42 There are a wide range of properties in the countryside outside villages, from large farmhouses and substantial residences to small dwellings built at a time when families had few possessions and were used to living in cramped, crowded conditions, and who would have worked locally on the land. These dwellings although small, often sit on large plots of land. Today these properties can be ill-suited for modern family life but remain expensive to purchase or rent because of the land that comes with the dwelling. Such properties are found across the district but with a notable concentration at the Land Settlement Association Estate at Great Abington. This policy applies to all the free standing buildings on a curtilage which together form a dwelling.

7.43 In determining what constitutes 'a disproportionate addition', account will be taken of the extent to which the dwelling has been previously extended, or could be extended under Permitted Development rights and the character of the area. For the purposes of this policy 'original' is defined as the size of the dwelling as it was built or as it existed as of the 1st July 1948, whichever is the oldest date.

Replacement Dwellings in the Countryside

Policy H/13: Replacement Dwellings in the Countryside

1. The one-for-one replacement of dwellings within a curtilage, outside the village framework boundaries shown on the Policies Map, will be permitted where:
 - a. It can be demonstrated that the use as a dwelling has not been abandoned;
 - b. If the replacement dwelling is not on the footprint of the original dwelling, that the original is demolished within a month of the replacement dwellings first occupation;
 - c. In considering countryside impact and effect on local character only the removal of existing buildings currently lawfully used for purposes ancillary to the residential use of the original dwelling can be taken into account and they must still be standing at the time of the application;
 - d. If in the Green Belt that the replacement dwelling is not materially larger than the one it replaces.
2. Caravans and mobile homes are distinct from permanent dwellings since they can be removed. Given the restrictions on development in the countryside the replacement of caravans and mobile homes with permanent dwellings will not be permitted outside village framework boundaries.

7.44 Where it can be demonstrated that the use of a dwelling has not been abandoned, replacement on a one-for-one basis can be permitted which should encourage more self-build housing projects. There is a growing trend for people to build their own homes which is limited by the availability of land. Assessment of the design quality, scale, countryside impact, and effect on local character of the proposed development will be considered against the other policies of the plan.

7.45 The Council may control the further expansion of replacement dwellings by the use of planning conditions to remove the rights under the General Permitted Development Order, to dwellings both within and outside the Green Belt.

Countryside Dwellings of Exceptional Quality

Policy H/14: Countryside Dwellings of Exceptional Quality

Outside the Green Belt, single new bespoke dwellings of exceptional quality will be permitted in the countryside providing all of the following criteria are met:

- a. The dwelling would reflect the highest standards in architecture, being recognised as truly outstanding or innovative;
- b. The dwelling would significantly enhance its immediate setting;
- c. The nature and size of the site, and the design of the dwelling, its landscaping and location on site are sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area and to wider views;
- d. That there are no existing dwellings on the site capable of being replaced under Policy H/13.

- 7.46 Our countryside benefits from and is enhanced by existing high quality countryside homes built before planning controls were introduced and when the population and business density of the area were both much lower than they are today. The NPPF says we should avoid the construction of isolated country homes unless there are special circumstances such as the exceptional quality and innovative nature of the design, that the house would enhance its immediate setting and that it is sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area. Sites with an existing dwelling which could be replaced under policy H/13 should be avoided in order to protect the supply of sites suitable for self-build and other more 'affordable' homes.
- 7.47 The Council's Economic Development Strategy shows an unfulfilled demand for large high quality homes in the £1 million plus category suitable for business executives. The desirability of the district as a place to live and work is key to attracting and retaining businesses in the area. So too is the availability of homes that meet the needs of top executives. A limited number of such bespoke homes could help to satisfy this demand and provide a significant enhancement to the countryside.

Development of Residential Gardens

Policy H/15: Development of Residential Gardens

The development of land used or last used as residential gardens for new dwellings will only be permitted where:

- a. The development is for a one-to one replacement of a dwelling in the countryside under Policy H/7 and/or:
- b. There would be no significant harm to the local area taking account of:
 - i. The character of the local area;
 - ii. Any direct and on-going impacts on the residential amenity of nearby properties;
 - iii. The proposed siting, design, scale, and materials of construction of the buildings;
 - iv. The existence of or ability to create a safe vehicular access;
 - v. The provision of adequate on-site parking or the existence of safe, convenient and adequate existing on-street parking;
 - vi. Any adverse impacts on the setting of a listed building, or the character of a conservation area, or other heritage asset;
 - vii. Any impacts on biodiversity and important trees;
 - viii. Ensuring that the form of development would not prevent the development of adjoining sites.

7.48 Over the years there has been a trend for development to take place in residential gardens as one of the only means available to provide new housing in villages and as a means whereby property owners can gain value from their land. Such developments include where an existing house or houses are demolished for redevelopment, and where an existing house is retained and new dwellings are erected in the garden. It is recognized that there are limited opportunities for new development in many villages and that there can be some situations where there can be development in residential gardens without harm to the local area.

7.49 The development of residential gardens has in the past led to concerns about impacts on residential amenity, local character, heritage, and from increased traffic. Gardens represent an important part of the character and amenity value of many villages which can be harmed by inappropriate development. The NPPF asks us to consider the case for including policies in our Local Plan to resist the inappropriate development of residential gardens.

Reuse of Buildings in the Countryside for Residential Use

Policy H/16: Reuse of Buildings in the Countryside for Residential Use

The change of use and adaptation of redundant or disused buildings in rural areas to residential use will only be permitted where:

- a. The buildings are unsuitable for employment use, or it being demonstrated through marketing the development opportunity for at least 12 months at a realistic price, that there is no demand for their development for employment use;
- b. The buildings are structurally sound, not makeshift in nature and are of permanent, substantial construction;
- c. There will be an enhancement to the immediate setting of the buildings;
- d. The form, bulk, design, landscaping and materials used in the change of use and adaptation and any associated extensions are sensitive to the character and appearance of the building and locality;
- e. There is a safe vehicular site access.

- 7.50 South Cambridgeshire has a rich heritage of agricultural buildings, some which are no longer needed for agricultural purposes. Where there is no prospect of their being used to provide local employment, the Council is supportive of allowing rural buildings to be adapted to make a contribution to meeting local housing needs. The reuse of existing rural buildings that are no longer needed for their original purpose provides an opportunity for development without the impact that new buildings have on the landscape. Reuse may therefore be allowed in situations where new buildings would not. It is important, however, to consider the potential impact in terms of the character of the building and the locality. Not all buildings in the countryside are suitable for conversion or adaptation to new uses, as they may be of insubstantial construction, of poor design, or not in keeping with their surroundings.

Working at Home

Policy H/17: Working at Home

The partial conversion, extension or change of use of residential dwellings to enable the residents to work at or from part of the dwelling will be permitted subject to:

- a. The rest of the property remaining in residential use;
- b. There being no significant harm to the residential amenity of neighbours or to the character of the locality arising from the appearance of the property, noise, hours and days of operation, fumes, vibration, dust, odours, car and pedestrian traffic generation, car parking impacts, safe vehicular access and advertising.

- 7.51 A growing number of people are working at or from home either full time or part time and in self-employment or as an alternative to going into the office. Many successful businesses have been set up and operated from residential properties before moving on to purpose built business accommodation. Home working can help to maintain economic prosperity and employment and relieve commuting pressure on our roads, and can be expected to grow further as rural broadband speeds increase.
- 7.52 Some small-scale manufacturing and service industries are operated by people working in their own homes, for example the manufacture of craft items and foodstuffs or the carrying out of clothing alterations or repairs. Planning permission is not normally required so long as such activities do not affect the overall domestic character of the building. However, if the non-residential use ceases to be ancillary, because the business has expanded, planning permission will be required. Indicators that a material change of use has occurred include:
- a significant alteration to the appearance of the dwelling;
 - a significant increase in the volume of visitors or traffic;
 - a significant increase in noise, fumes or odour coming from the dwelling;
 - the installation of special machinery or equipment not normally found in a dwelling; and the laying out of rooms in such a way that they could not easily revert to residential use at the end of the working day.

Dwellings to Support a Rural-based Enterprise

Policy H/18: Dwellings to Support a Rural-based Enterprise

1. Proposals for permanent dwellings in the countryside for full-time workers in agriculture or forestry or in another business where a rural location is essential, will be permitted if special circumstances can be demonstrated by it meeting all of the following criteria:
 - a. There is a clear existing functional need for one or more workers to be readily available at most times;
 - b. The enterprise has been established for at least three years and is, and should remain financially viable;
 - c. There is no other accommodation within the site / holding or nearby which is currently suitable and available, or could be made available and suitable through conversion and change of use;
 - d. A dwelling or building suitable for conversion to a dwelling within the site/holding has not been sold on the open housing market without an agricultural or other occupancy condition in the last year;
 - e. The proposed dwelling is no larger than that required to meet the reasonable needs of the enterprise.

2. Where criterion b. cannot be met or it is a new enterprise on a well established site / holding, the development of a temporary dwelling may be permitted for up to three years where all the other criteria above are met, and there is clear evidence demonstrating:
 - f. A firm intention and ability to develop the enterprise;
 - g. That the enterprise has been planned on a sound financial basis;
 - h. That the functional need cannot be fulfilled by another existing building on the site/holding or any existing accommodation.

3. Where a new dwelling is permitted, this will be the subject of a condition ensuring the occupation will be limited to a person solely or mainly working, or last working in the locality in agriculture, forestry or in another business where a rural location is essential, or a surviving partner of such a person, and to any resident dependents.

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4. The relaxation of an occupancy condition will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that:
 - i. There is no longer a continued need for the dwelling on the site / holding or for the enterprise, or to house surviving partners and any resident dependents;
 - j. There is no long term need for a dwelling with restricted occupancy to serve need in the locality;
 - k. The property has been marketed locally for a reasonable period (minimum 12 months) at a price which reflects the existence of the occupancy condition.

- 7.53 In many instances it will be possible for workers in agricultural and land-based occupations to live in a town or village near to their business location. However, occasionally the nature of agricultural and other rural enterprises make it essential for someone to live on, or in close proximity to the enterprise. Applications for planning permission in such circumstances will need to demonstrate that the enterprise or intention to engage in one is genuine and will be sustained for a reasonable period of time that is sufficient to warrant a dwelling in the countryside where it would not otherwise be permitted. It will be necessary to establish that the enterprise needs one or more workers to be readily available at most times, for example to provide essential care to animals or processes at short notice and to deal quickly with emergencies that could cause serious loss of crops or produce. Such dwellings may be exceptionally permitted in open countryside only because of the needs of the enterprise. National planning policy guidance allows for this as a special circumstance which can justify the national policy against new isolated homes in the countryside. As this is a departure from policy, the planning permission will be subject to a condition restricting occupation.
- 7.54 In general, preference will be given to the re-use or replacement of existing buildings over those which propose the erection of a new dwelling in order to avoid further development in the countryside. The erection of a new dwelling could not be justified where an existing dwelling serving the site / holding / enterprise or closely associated with it has either recently been sold off or in some other way effectively separated from it. The assessment of the design quality, scale, countryside impact, and effect on local character of the proposed development will be considered against the other policies of the plan.
- 7.55 The Council will seek advice on the viability of proposed enterprises and where future viability is uncertain will resist new permanent dwellings in the countryside. In these circumstances a temporary planning permission for a caravan may be granted to enable the enterprise an opportunity to demonstrate viability.
- 7.56 The size and nature of such dwellings should be commensurate with the reasonable needs of the enterprise. Unusually large dwellings in relation to the staff needs of the enterprise, or expensive construction in relation to the income it can sustain, should not be permitted.

- 7.57 Regarding equestrian based rural enterprises, it should be noted that the security of horses is not considered to be sufficient in itself to justify the provision of a dwelling as site security can be achieved by other methods.
- 7.58 When marketing a dwelling subject to an occupancy condition, if other buildings are associated with the dwelling, the marketing must include the dwelling being offered for sale independently of the other buildings.

Provision for Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople

Policy H/19: Provision for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

1. Provision will be made for at least 85 permanent Gypsy and Traveller pitches between 2011 and 2031, and at least 4 plots for Travelling Showpeople between 2011 and 2016.
2. Sites that have unrestricted planning permission for Gypsy and Traveller or Travelling Showpeople site use are safeguarded for this use. Planning permission for alternative development or changes of use will not be permitted.

- 7.59 The Government's [Planning Policy for Traveller Sites](#) requires that local planning authorities set targets for the provision of Gypsies and Traveller pitches and Travelling Showpeople plots which address the likely site accommodation needs of travellers in their area, working collaboratively with neighbouring local planning authorities.
- 7.60 To help inform the development of a local target, the Council joined forces with other local authorities in Cambridgeshire, as well as parts of Norfolk and Suffolk, to commission a [Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment](#). The target identified in the policy reflects the findings of the study, as modified following an internal review³.

³ [South Cambridgeshire District Council Housing Portfolio Holder meeting 13th June 2012](#)

Gypsy and Traveller need in South Cambridgeshire

Period	Need for Gypsy and Traveller Pitches
2011 - 2016	65
2016 - 2021	0
2021 - 2026	20
2026 – 2031	0
TOTAL 2011 to 2031	85

- 7.61 Government policy requires Councils to maintain a five year land supply of Travellers sites, in a similar way to housing, and identify deliverable sites to meet the needs to meet identified for the first five years. Between January 2011 and May 2013, the Council had granted or resolved to grant planning permission for 72 pitches. In addition, a site at Chesterton Fen Road for 26 pitches, on land identified for Gypsy and Traveller pitches in the [South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004](#), is under construction at time of writing, with a number of pitches now occupied. Therefore sufficient sites have come forward through windfall planning applications to meet the identified need. The Plan does not propose any further allocations.
- 7.62 To ensure that the levels of Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation are maintained, sites are safeguarded to meet the continuing housing needs of these communities. Safeguarding will ensure that sites are not lost to competing uses. This could be a particular issue in Chesterton Fen Road where major developments are taking place close by. Unrestricted means not subject to conditions restricting the time of occupancy such as a temporary or personal planning permission. The policy will apply to any new permission granted as well existing sites. It excludes former publicly owned sites at Meadow Lane, Willingham and Mettle Hill, Meldreth, where the use has been discontinued.
- 7.63 The Council was planning to produce a separate Gypsy and Traveller Development Plan Document, and consulted on principles in 2006, and site options and policies in 2009. Following significant changes to government policy, including the removal of regional plans, it was determined that Gypsy and Traveller issues should be addressed as part of a single Local plan, rather than continuing to prepare a separate document.
- 7.64 The Needs Assessment notes that beyond the immediate need, assessments of growth are based on modelling, and the best information available. The difficulties in protecting forward beyond 10 years, are noted in [national guidance on carrying out needs assessments](#). Needs Assessments are reviewed periodically. There will be a need to monitor the plan and review it as necessary to take account of more up to date evidence.
- 7.65 The Government's Planning Policy for Travellers Sites requires plans to identify specific sites, or where not possible broad locations, where future need will be met.

The Council considers that major developments provide an opportunity to deliver provision to meet longer term needs should they arise.

Gypsy and Traveller Provision at New Communities

Policy H/20: Gypsy and Traveller Provision at New Communities

1. Opportunities to deliver Gypsy and Traveller sites will be sought as part of large scale new communities and significant major development sites.
2. The location of site provision will be identified through the masterplanning and design process. Sites provided will meet the following criteria:
 - a. Sites will be located within but on the edge of the major development, or outside but in close proximity to the major development. Sites in the Green Belt would not be appropriate, unless exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated at the masterplanning and planning application stage. The site will not be located in identified green separation;
 - b. The sites will be well related to the major development, enabling good access to the services and facilities of the development, providing safe access to the major development on foot, cycle and public transport. Access should not rely on minor residential roads.

7.66 If need is identified, major developments provide an opportunity to deliver pitches as part of mainstream development, ensuring they meet the needs of all sectors of the community, in sustainable locations close to services and facilities, where sites can be planned into the developments from the outset. As stated in *The Road Ahead: Final Report of the Independent Task Group on Site Provision and Enforcement for Gypsies and Travellers* published by the Department of Communities and Local Government in December 2007, the approach of integrating the provision of Gypsy and Traveller accommodation as part of new development helps to erode misconceptions and distrust. Development that accommodates both Gypsies and Travellers and the settled community from its conception can remove the potential for friction, and can also be physically planned in a coordinated and integrated manner.

7.67 The Local Plan has not identified specific sites for Gypsy and Traveller pitch provision at each of the major developments it includes. Instead a criteria-based policy is included which will guide the identification of a site through the masterplanning of the developments. This would allow design issues and the relationship between land uses to be considered fully at the design stage. There would then be further consultation through the planning application process. The policy provides flexibility with regard to the location of provision, in order that the best location(s) can be identified through the masterplanning and design process. Phasing plans would also need to consider the availability of services and facilities when sites were to be occupied.

- 7.68 Many Gypsies and Travellers express a preference for a rural location, which is on the edge of or closely located to a large town or city consistent with traditional lifestyles and means of employment.
- 7.69 Generally individual sites delivered through this policy should be between 5 and 10 pitches in scale. If sites are delivered as affordable sites, they will count towards the affordable housing requirement of the development. However, provision could also be private, and sold or leased to Gypsies and Travellers, and tenure issues will be determined through site-specific negotiations, and evidence of local need at the time of delivery.

Proposals for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople Sites on Unallocated Land Outside Development Frameworks

Policy H/21: Proposals for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople Sites on Unallocated Land Outside Development Frameworks

Planning permission for Gypsy and Traveller caravan sites and sites for Travelling Showpeople on unallocated land outside development frameworks, and outside the Cambridge Green Belt, will only be granted where:

- a. The Council is satisfied that the applicant has adequately demonstrated a clear need for a site in the district, and the number, type and tenure of pitches proposed, which cannot be met by a lawful existing or available allocated site;
- b. The site is located in a sustainable location, well related to a settlement with a range of services and facilities, including a primary school, a food shop and healthcare facilities, and is, or can be made, safely accessible on foot, by cycle or public transport;
- c. The needs of residents of the site can be met appropriately by local facilities and services without placing undue pressure on them;
- d. The number and nature of pitches provided on the site is appropriate to the site size and location, will address the identified need;
- e. The site would not present unacceptable adverse or detrimental impact on the health, safety and living conditions of the residents of the site by virtue of its location;
- f. The site, or the cumulative impact of the site, in combination with existing or planned sites, would respect the scale of, and not dominate, the nearest settled community;

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- g. The site, or the cumulative impact of the site in combination with existing or planned sites, would not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the amenity of surrounding land uses, the countryside and landscape character, village character, on heritage or biodiversity interests, or from traffic generated;
- h. The site location would not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the effectiveness and amenity of existing or proposed public rights of way;
- i. Sites for Travelling Showpeople must also be suitable for the storage, maintenance and testing of items of mobile equipment.

7.70 This policy will be used to assess planning applications for Gypsy and Traveller pitches and Travelling Showpeople plots which come forward on sites which have not been allocated through the Local Plan, often referred to as windfall proposals.

7.71 Proposals for Gypsy and Traveller caravan sites are predominantly residential uses and will be acceptable within development frameworks where policies in the Local Plan are met; in particular in terms of the scale and design of development being appropriate to the settlement. Development outside development frameworks is tightly controlled, and applicants seeking planning permission for sites will need to demonstrate the need for a site in the district.

7.72 The Government's Planning Policy for Travellers Sites establishes that the existing level of provision and need for sites, the availability of alternative accommodation, and the personal circumstances of the applicant are material considerations when considering planning applications.

7.73 The policy excludes land in the Green Belt. National planning policy establishes a general presumption against inappropriate development in the Green Belt. The definition of inappropriate development includes Gypsy and Traveller sites and Travelling Showpeople sites. If future need arises for affordable sites, which cannot be met outside the Green Belt, consideration of Gypsy and Traveller caravan site provision in the Green Belt will be treated in accordance with the approach to affordable housing exceptions sites.

7.74 Issues of sustainability apply to Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople sites, emphasised by government policy. National planning guidance also requires that local planning authorities strictly limit new traveller site development in open countryside that is away from existing settlements.

7.75 Sites must be sited in locations that provide a safe environment for the occupants including in terms of their general health well-being, and should avoid locations in the vicinity of dangerous roads, railway lines, water bodies, or power lines unless impacts can be satisfactorily mitigated. The use of unstable or contaminated land, or hazardous areas will not be permitted unless appropriate mitigation can be achieved. Sites must also appropriately address flood risk. Caravans and mobile

homes intended for permanent use will not be permitted in areas of a high probability of flood risk or on the functional floodplain or where sites would increase risk of flooding elsewhere.

- 7.76 Proposals will need to be served by a vehicular access point which adheres to the highway authority's guidance and standards. There will also need to be sufficient capacity in the local highway network to accommodate the site.
- 7.77 Travelling Showpeople sites differ in that they need to provide secure, permanent bases for the storage of equipment when not in use. Most Showpeople need to live alongside their equipment, so sites must be suitable for both residential and business use, and be capable of accommodating equipment which is sometimes large. Care needs to be taken that such activities are appropriately designed and located in order to avoid nuisance to neighbouring uses.

Design of Gypsy and Traveller Sites, and Travelling Showpeople Sites

Policy H/22: Design of Gypsy and Traveller Sites, and Travelling Showpeople Sites

Proposals for Gypsies and Traveller sites and Travelling Showpeople sites will only be granted planning permission where they are of a good design layout, have regard to government good practice guidance, and where:

- a. The proposal clearly demarcates the site and pitch boundaries using appropriate boundary treatment and landscaping sympathetic to, and in keeping with, the surrounding area. There should also be clear delineation of public communal areas and private space, and between residential areas and any non-residential areas;
- b. Site design takes account of the needs of residents, and provides an appropriate pitch layout that ensures security and safety of residents, and allows ease of movement, whether walking, cycling or driving;
- c. There is safe access for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, including for turning and parking, vehicles towing caravans, emergency vehicles and servicing requirements, including waste collection;
- d. All necessary utilities can be provided on the site including mains water, electricity supply, drainage, sanitation and provision for the screened storage and collection of refuse, including recyclable materials;
- e. The site is not located on contaminated land, unless the land is capable of adequate amelioration prior to occupation;

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- f. The proposal would avoid any unacceptable adverse or detrimental impact on the health and living conditions of the residents of the site or on neighbouring uses, including as a result of excessive noise, dust, fumes, lighting, traffic generation or activity;
- g. Built development in the countryside is kept to the minimum required, in order to minimise harm to the surrounding area. Any amenity buildings proposed are of an appropriate scale and reasonably related to the size of the pitch, and are of an appropriate design for the location;
- h. Pitches should be an appropriate scale for the size and number of caravans to be accommodated, without over-crowding or unnecessary sprawl at an appropriate density;
- i. Provision of space for play should be made on larger sites (10 or more pitches).

- 7.78 This policy addresses specific design principles that should be met by all new Gypsy and Traveller sites or Travelling Showpeople sites. The Government has published specific guidance relating to the design of Gypsy and Traveller pitches ([Designing Gypsy and Traveller Sites – Good Practice Guide](#)) which should be considered when applying for planning permission. Further guidance will also be included in the District Design Guide SPD.
- 7.79 Gypsy and Traveller caravan sites are predominantly residential uses. This is established by government guidance on designing Gypsy and Traveller sites and is reflected in South Cambridgeshire. Any employment uses would require planning permission, and could therefore be considered on their merits in the particular location. However, Travelling Showpeople may require space for the storage and maintenance of large pieces of equipment. The site design and layout should ensure the amenity and safety of residents is protected by locating non-residential uses away from the residential and communal areas.
- 7.80 The site design and layout should ensure the safety and security of residents. If external lighting will help achieve this, it should be designed into the proposal at the outset to ensure it is the minimum required and appropriate for the location. Safe access to, and movement within, the site for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles is essential, as well as ensuring access is retained at all times for emergency vehicles and servicing requirements, including refuse collection.
- 7.81 Sites must be capable of being serviced by all necessary utilities in order to provide an appropriate residential environment. Foul drainage to a public sewer should be provided wherever possible. Where foul drainage to a public sewer is not feasible sites will only be permitted if proposed alternative facilities are considered adequate and would not pose an unacceptable risk to the quality or quantity of ground or surface water, pollution of local ditches, watercourses or sites of biodiversity importance. Sites must incorporate appropriate measures for surface water drainage, utilising sustainable drainage systems where practicable.

- 7.82 Each pitch should be designed to provide appropriate accommodation for a household, and should normally allow for the siting of at least one trailer / mobile home and a touring caravan and space for car parking. Transit site pitches, providing short term accommodation, are likely to be smaller, as national design guidance states, each pitch should be capable of accommodating touring caravans, rather than space for a static caravan.
- 7.83 Proposals for family sites, such as to accommodate an extended family with a number of caravans, will be required to establish the number of pitches the site is capable of providing if it were occupied by separate family units, in order that the impacts of a site are fully considered.
- 7.84 The number of parking spaces will be considered against car parking standards contained in the development plan, based on the anticipated number of residents. If appropriate planning conditions will be applied to any planning permission, restricting the parking of larger vehicles or the number of commercial vehicles.
- 7.85 Built development in the countryside will be kept to the minimum required in order to minimise harm to the surrounding area. Amenity blocks, which typically include kitchen and bathroom facilities, will be considered on their merits and must be compatible with the scale of development and the pitch on which it is to be accommodated. Energy and water efficiency of built development should be considered, reflecting policies contained elsewhere in the development plan. All private and communal buildings will need to comply with mobility standards as required by building regulations.
- 7.86 Proposals for stables will be considered on their merits. Sites will need to include sufficient space to exercise horses or be readily accessible to local bridleways and other permitted rights of way.
- 7.87 Improvement or provision of infrastructure may be necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms. It is important to ensure that children have safe access to space for play. In order to meet the needs of residents of larger sites should include distinct areas for children to play. Separate contributions to play space will not normally be sought.

